DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 341 046 CS 010 823

TITLE Individualization in the Content Areas. Individualized Inservice Packet Number VIII. Teaching Teen Reading Series.
INSTITUTION Ohio State Dept. of Education, Columbus.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 25p.; For other packets in the series, see CS 010 816-824.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Content Area Reading; Independent Study; *Individualized Instruction; *Informal Assessment; Inservice Teacher Education; Instructional Improvement; Intermediate Grades; Learning Strategies; Secondary Education; Teacher Improvement
IDENTIFIERS Collective Learning; Ohio

ABSTRACT

This individualized inservice packet enables teachers to individualize instruction in the content areas through the utilization of suggested teaching tactics which encourage student mastery as well as independent behavior. It is one of a nine-part series of booklets--Teaching Teen Reading--in self-instructional format intended as a practical resource for teachers desiring condensed, readily usable answers to questions regarding reading instruction. The booklet's five main sections discuss informal skills assessment for individualized instruction, and present four strategies for individualization, including levels of sophistication, differential structuring, collaboration by grouping, and varying assignment length. A self-corrective post test and a glossary are attached. (SR)

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Individualization in the Content Areas

Individualized
Inservice
Packet
Number VIII

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TEACHING TEEN READING SERIES

Ohio Department of Education
Columbus

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FOREWORD

One of the complex problems facing educational institutions today is the challenge of developing personalized education programs to meet the needs of youth and adults. Providing students with the skills of reading is fundamental to this essential contribution of our schools. The ability to read and the use of reading skills are necessary components in the foundation of lifetime learning.

All teachers must be competent with the reading process so that their students might receive individualized and personalized learning. Students who are unable to use reading skills appropriate to the content area tasks they encounter lose valuable opportunities to retrieve and store knowledge and information.

The Division of Inservice Education continues to develop inservice education materials which may be used individually by teachers or by teacher leaders working together with a small group of colleagues. The materials are designed to give condensed professional information which will meet an instructional need or interest.

The **TEACHING TEEN READING SERIES** was designed as a resource for the teachers of upper elementary, middle and secondary schools. The content complements the use of any print materials supplied within the schools. Each of the nine inservice booklets in the series include a self-instructional format which contains concept, methodology, and content application. Two booklets relate to the process of diagnosis, four booklets provide prescriptive techniques, and three booklets illustrate classroom and independent application of reading skills.

Initially one set of this series was distributed to every building principal in Ohio. During the last six years the demand for copies has steadily increased as copies have been requested for individual use, for staff inservice, as the course text for graduate and undergraduate reading classes, and for parents who wish to support their son or daughter with mastery of a subject area.

Ohio remains in the forefront of providing inservice leadership through the provision of relevant materials. The Ohio Department of Education continues to strive to develop inservice materials which will be beneficial to teachers and administrators as they endeavor to work as a leadership team to achieve excellence in education.

Franklin B. Walter

Franklin B. Walter
Superintendent of Public Instruction

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The staff of the Division of Inservice Education expresses appreciation to the members of the teacher reaction panel for their critique of draft editions in terms of content, format, and practicality.

Rosemary Bonial—Bellaire Public Schools

Sr. Donna Capuano—St. Robert School, Euclid

Elizabeth Cisko—Peoples Junior High School, Cincinnati

Keith Clark—Admiral King High School, Lorain

Steven Fark—Kettlersville Elementary School, Kettlersville

Jerry Ledbetter—Hawthorne Boone Elementary School, Lorain

Sr. Marian Leonard—The Cleveland Diocese

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The activity which is the subject of this report was supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. However, opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this **Individualized Inservice Packet** is to enable the teacher to individualize subject matter following an informal skills assessment. This will occur through the utilization of suggested teaching tactics which will encourage student mastery as well as independent behavior. Strategies for individualization include levels of sophistication, differential structuring, collaboration by grouping, and varying assignment length.

Individualizing subject matter assignments means providing that guidance which is necessary to ensure that each student will master the required reading. This instructional approach does not require a separate preparation for each student in the class. Nor does it necessitate a different text for every individual. No one strategy is used exclusively. Various tactics will prove useful in different situations as well as in a variety of combinations.

The content of this packet does not refer to any particular print material but is intended to be used with the books, reference sets, periodicals and other resources on hand.

To receive the maximum benefit from the packet, teachers are urged to apply to the sections the methodology and organization used with their students. The ideas presented in the packet are intended to create particular teaching situations to meet the reading needs of particular students.

The INDIVIDUALIZED INSERVICE PACKET is a practical resource for teachers who have a question regarding reading instruction which requires a condensed, readily usable answer. It is a means for securing a segment of information for immediate application in the classroom as compared to researching many sources.

A self-instruction process is incorporated beginning with steps of securing instructional information, including suggested uses in content teaching situations, and followed by a self-corrective post evaluation. The packet content is developed to provide the understandings summarized in the post evaluation. This form may be reproduced for the teacher's personal use. The responses may lead to continued study of the packet or to reading of the literature included in the bibliography.

INDIVIDUALIZATION IN THE CONTENT AREAS

Part I INFORMAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT FOR INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

OBJECTIVE

To enable the teacher to construct an evaluation instrument for his content area which will aid in the identification of student skill strengths and weaknesses as well as the background information possessed by the student.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPT

Awareness of the differences which exist among students will help to stimulate adjustments in teaching tactics to accommodate these individual needs. Neither standardized tests nor the Content Informal Reading Inventory provide adequate information about the secondary student's readiness for learning the content of a specific class. However, an informal assessment of entry behavior can be constructed in any content area. This will provide the most meaningful supplementary information as preparations are made for instruction.

CONSTRUCTING AN INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

In building this evaluative instrument consider these questions:

1) What knowledge and skills are critical to this content area?
2) What will be taught?
3) How will it be taught?
4) What prior knowledge or skills must the students possess in order to benefit from this instruction?

Answers here will reflect values which will determine the evaluation of student achievement. The informal assessment is unique to each teacher.

The instrument has definite segments:

1) purpose of the assessment
2) directions for the teacher
3) directions to the student
4) selections used to assess background knowledge
5) questions to be answered by the student to test for technical vocabulary, problem solving, following directions, and spelling.

The construction of the informal assessment is based on key decisions. It is administered and the results are compiled. A clear picture of the student's needs surfaces. This becomes the basis for directed teaching activities on several levels which accommodate individual differences.

Suggested Teaching Tactic

Prior to beginning a new unit, assess the student's knowledge and skills as a guide to formulating appropriate instruction.

Content Example—Earth Science

1) Purpose of the assessment:

a) To ask the student to demonstrate understanding of technical terms.
b) To have the student use previous knowledge to solve a problem.
c) To evaluate the student's ability to follow directions.
d) To determine if the student can spell key vocabulary correctly.

2) Directions for the teacher:

a) Provide the student with sentences containing key vocabulary. Ask the student to define the identified term.

b) Present a diagram from the previous chapter and ask the student to explain why we have never seen the back of the moon from the earth.

c) Have the student perform an activity by following directions.

d) Write words phonetically that the student may have trouble spelling. Ask the student to write them correctly.

3) Directions to the student:

In our next unit we are going to be learning about rising and falling tides as well as what causes them. You will be encountering several new vocabulary words. I want to find out how well you can understand these terms, how much you remember about the views of the moon, how accurately you can follow directions, and if you can spell some scientific terms correctly. This is not a test but an inventory of your skills.

4) and 5) Questions to be answered:

a) Defining key vocabulary

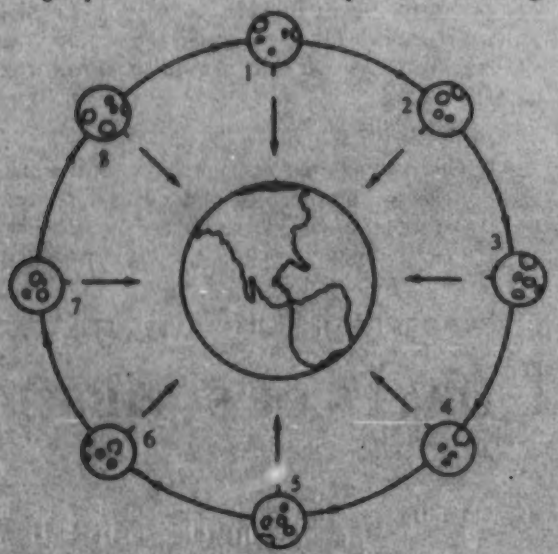
From what you read in each sentence, write a short definition for the underlined word.

Fishermen and boating people know that the tidal range varies in different localities.

The moon rotates while it revolves around the earth.

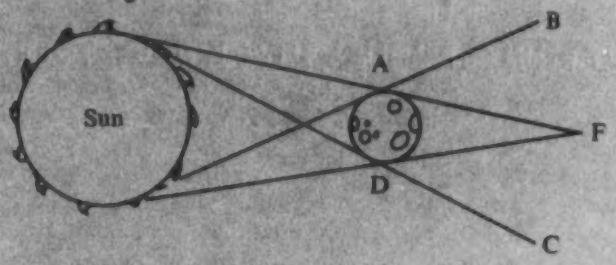
When the moon is between the earth and the sun, we have new moon. (Describe what we see.)

b) Solving a problem on the basis of previous knowledge.



How does the diagram explain why we have never seen the back of the moon from the earth?

c) Following directions



Copy the drawing in your notebook.

Shade the area enclosed by A, D and F in pencil.

Now shade the area, A, B, F and F, C, D in red pencil. Do not go over the area you shaded before.

Write in the letter P in two places where the moon will form a partial eclipse

Write a letter T where the moon will form a total eclipse.

d) Spelling words

The following words are written phonetically.
Write the correct spelling.

LOO-nur	to-POG-ra-fee	PUM-is
as-tro-NAWTS	KRAY-turs	FAY-ziz

Adapted from Earth Science 3. *Man and Energy in Space*. Oxenhorn (Globe Book Company A 70). 88-114

An analysis of responses to these types of questions helps to determine when to use large group, small group, or individualized instruction. Giving consideration to this decision will help to afford each student a successful experience in the content classroom.

Suggested Criterion Referenced Measurement

Given an informal assessment prior to beginning a unit the student will demonstrate a present level of understanding as well as skill knowledge by defining technical vocabulary, solving a problem based on previous knowledge, following directions and spelling correctly phonetic representations of key terms.

Part II LEVELS OF SOPHISTICATION

OBJECTIVE

To enable the teacher to match question difficulty to the student's reading ability so that each student can experience the satisfaction of mastery at a level of comprehension.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPT

Not all students are able to answer questions requiring the application of meaning. Some profit from questions designed to identify and generalize relationships. The less capable reader is more successful with the location and recall of answers to specific factual questions. Each student can experience success on his own level of comprehension and still obtain all the essential information in an assignment. In addition, postreading classroom discussion is planned to ensure that there is a sharing of information by all. Care is taken not to confine different groups of students to one level of understanding.

SUGGESTED APPLICATION WITH LEARNERS

CONSTRUCTING A STUDY GUIDE

The study guide is a tool for the individualization of instruction in subject matter areas. It focuses direction for student mastery through consideration of the levels of sophistication. A study guide may be used for any unit of work as well as for guided classroom reading, homework reading, content reflection, and diagnostic purposes.

Preparation:

1. **Determine the levels of comprehension appropriate for the students in the class.**
   a. **Level I—recall, state, list . . . . . .**
   b. **Level II—predict, infer, associate . . . . . .**
   c. **Level III—apply, critique, assess . . . . . .**
2. **Analyze the content to determine which organization pattern is applicable.**
   a. **enumeration**
   b. **compare/contrast**
   c. **cause/effect**
   d. **time/order**
3. **Analyze the amount of assistance necessary**
   a. **student competency**
   b. **material difficulty**
4. **Determine format**
5. **Present to the students with teacher guidance**
6. **Discuss and share findings**

Suggested Teaching Tactic

Organizational Pattern—
Compare/Contrast

Level I

After reading the poem put a check beside the sentence(s) which are true.

_____ The boy was down by the sea shore.
_____ A silver shell was dropped into the sea.
_____ The boat caused a fan-like spray.

Level II

In addition to the items that have caused waves in the sea, what do you predict would be the next likely one?

Level III

To what other things do the characteristics of the sky apply?

Content Example—Poetry

THE SEA IS A MIRROR

Virginia Kunkle

A boy
From the lighthouse tower
Watched the sea
Meet the sky.
Together they were a mirror
Shiny and blue
Until a gull flew low
Dropping a shell
Of silver hue.
A boat cut through the water
And a red buoy rocked
In fan-like spray.
Now the water
No longer was still and blue
Nor reflected the sky
As mirrors do.

Suggested Criterion Referenced Measurement

Given questions according to his level of sophistication, the student will experience mastery at a level of comprehension.

Part III DIFFERENTIAL STRUCTURING

OBJECTIVE

To enable the teacher to structure questions in a manner that insures student success in locating, identifying, and verifying essential information in the reading assignment.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPT

Asking questions or giving instructions which incorporate varying degrees of structure, according to the student's needs, is one of the most useful techniques for individualizing subject matter. Structure refers to the guidance built into the question.

SUGGESTED APPLICATION WITH LEARNERS

PROVIDING GUIDANCE THROUGH STRUCTURE

Some teacher guidance consists only of the direction to read a chapter for the next day. This seems to imply that the student is being asked to read for answers to questions he does not know. Depending on the length of the assignment as well as the difficulty the student is likely to have with the reading material, varying degrees of structure may be provided.

Suggested Teaching Tactic

Provide the student with a purpose for attacking the reading assignment.

A higher level of structure is needed for the student who will have difficulty locating and verifying information.

Reacting to alternatives appears to be easier than generating alternatives. Questions can be written with several possible answers. The student is then asked to verify one or more of the alternatives.

Depending on students' needs the alternatives may represent different levels of comprehension. Each is supported with evidence from reading.

Ask the student to verify the literal existence of details in the text. These are included in the question.

When the student is unable to read well enough to comprehend material in paragraph form, supply the student with a list of words. Direct the student to verify or reject them in light of the subject matter question.

Give locational aid in the form of page and paragraph to the student who is overwhelmed by several pages of reading.

Content Example—Health

Read to find out how meals can be made more appetizing.

After reading the assignment select the best answer(s) to this question, and be ready to support your response(s).

How can meals be made more appetizing?

____ variety in flavor
____ variety in quantity
____ variety in color
____ variety in configuration
____ variety in texture
____ variety in temperature

How can this meal be made more appetizing?

macaroni and cheese
green beans
cottage cheese
white bread
vanilla ice cream
milk

Where in the chapter does it say that variety in flavor, color, texture, and temperature can make a meal more appetizing?

Circle the words which tell how you think a meal could be made more attractive.

sweet and sour
color
crisp and soft
bland and well-seasoned
flavor
temperature
hot and cold
crisp
sweet
cold

Read page 183, second paragraph, to find out how meals can be made more appetizing.

Adapted from *Health and Growth 7*, Richmond and others (Scott, Foresman and Company, 1972) 183

Suggested Criterion Referenced Measurement

Given questions structured according to individual needs, the student will locate, identify, and verify essential information in the reading assignment.

Part IV COLLABORATION BY GROUPING

OBJECTIVE

To enable the teacher to approach individualization through flexible grouping practices in order that the student may benefit from the sharing of information and skills which this approach promotes.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPT

When grouping is under consideration as a teaching practice, flexibility is probably the major condition. Becoming adept at forming temporary groups will greatly improve the learning climate. Groups are organized to develop a skill, provide a particular experience, or develop and enlarge a given concept. When the learning has taken place, which is indicated when the behavioral criteria have been met, the group is dissolved and others are formed to meet the new objective.

Two facts are clear regarding grouping. First, students do learn from each other as they assist or challenge their peers through interaction. Second, when teachers are freed from the constraints of the lecture approach they are more able to aid, stimulate, and evaluate students in individual ways. Grouping which encourages team sharing, the essence of group collaboration, can take several forms within any classroom.

Achievement Grouping

The class is divided into two or more groups. These represent the different levels of reading performance. This type of grouping is particularly useful in conjunction with the technique of questioning at different levels of comprehension. Since formal evaluation scores often reflect factors other than actual achievement, the following questions could be considered:

1) Should observation supplement test results?
2) Where should the borderline student be placed?

Research Grouping

Another temporary group may be formed to answer a question. Students will broaden socially and intellectually as a result of working in such a group.

Interest Grouping

Students are teamed to complete tasks which represent common interests. Students may sign up for membership in such a group.

Special Needs Grouping

These groups are formed to overcome a deficiency or for skill building. Following presentation of the skill, transfer occurs in materials on the students' appropriate levels. This is an individual activity when only one student needs the work.

Team or Pair Grouping

Students are given a specific task to accomplish. Reading activities for pairs might involve word recognition, shared oral reading, story telling, dictionary use, and checking workbooks. Solutions to problems are worked out together. Care is taken to team, or pair, children with others who are compatible. Psychological research cautions that students in teams must exchange roles, because the one in the pupil role learns and retains substantially more than the one in the teacher role.

Tutorial Grouping

One person who has a superior skill in reading can be teamed with one or more students who are having trouble. The tutor reinforces his own mastery while helping the learner. Since students tend to use language their peers understand, they make good tutors. Each individual's strengths are noted so that all can eventually serve as group leader or tutor. With direction from the teacher, the tutor may read portions of an assignment to others, clarify directions, react to answers, and generally provide assistance. At other times, two readers of equal ability may help each other. They combine information to arrive at a larger understanding than either could have achieved alone.

Random Grouping

This is perhaps the most common form of collaboration in the subject matter classroom. Two or more students are teamed on the basis of any of the following random means:

seating arrangement
counting off
role-playing
demonstrations

The most important element here is that interaction among students is encouraged. Each student has the opportunity to verbalize his thinking as well as question other students.

Part V VARYING ASSIGNMENT LENGTH

OBJECTIVE

To enable the teacher to individualize reading assignments by varying the number of understandings to be gained by the student.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPT

Mastery of fewer understandings is more important than coverage of large amounts of subject matter. Reducing reading assignments to manageable proportions affords more opportunity for success. Some students are directed to read only the important sections of the material. Others select a few important ideas. Poor readers may be asked to verify certain key words. This particular technique is useful in conjunction with differential structuring of questions.

Other students will need more time to complete required reading. Here, then, time is the factor affecting the student's success. Even though the schedule may make this type of assistance difficult, the content teacher has the option to consider ways of adjusting the time factor while maintaining guidance and control. How firmly are completion dates enforced? What does the student do who completes the assignment ahead of time?

For the student who has a reading disability, important ideas in the particular content area are communicated through pictures, tapes, records, films, filmstrips, and other media. At the same time, efforts continue to improve his reading ability. Media are a supplement to, rather than replacement for, the acquisition of knowledge through reading.

MODIFYING UNDERSTANDINGS TO BE ACQUIRED

The goal of individualization is to release the potential of the learner. The teacher considers the individual student's potential as everything to which the learner is capable of responding. The degree of understanding and the amount of reading time are differentiated to correspond with these represented individual differences. In addition, students are encouraged to become actively involved in utilizing their full capacity.

Suggested Teaching Tactic

Emphasize the developmental needs of the learner. Analyze the content to locate the important sections and consider ways of adjusting the time factor.

Content Example—Social Studies

Time Factor		Questions to Answer
Tom 1 week	Margaret 1 day	Read Chapter 19 to learn about great Ohioans who have led the nation. In this chapter as well as in Chapter 16, you will have read about a number of prominent Ohioans besides those who attained the presidency. Which of them do you think could have handled that office, and why?
1 day	1 period	In Chapter 19, read pages 262-271 and answer this question: What do you consider to be the outstanding achievement of each of Ohio's presidents?
1 period	½ period and individual research on President Garfield	Locate the following words on pages 274-277 and write their meaning. Consult the Glossary if necessary. diplomat isolationist conservative

Adapted from *Ohio*, Roberts (Laidlaw Brothers, 1969), 262-277.

Suggested Criterion Referenced Measurement

Given questions which require various degrees of understanding, the student will demonstrate mastery on the level appropriate and within an adjusted time factor.

SELF-CORRECTIVE POST TEST

Appraise the degree to which some practices of individualization are employed in your classroom.

1. Do you preassess the entry behavior of your students in preparation for instruction?

   Yes Partially No

2. Do you analyze responses to informal assessments to determine when to use large group, small group, or individualized instruction?

   Yes Partially No

3. Do you match question difficulty to the student's reading ability?

   Yes Partially No

4. Do you provide varying degrees of guidance within questions to ensure student success in locating, identifying, and verifying essential information in the reading assignment?

   Yes Partially No

5. Do you employ flexible grouping practices?

   Yes Partially No

6. Do you vary the number of understandings to be gained by the student?

   Yes Partially No

7. Do you individualize, that is, provide that guidance necessary to ensure that each student will master the required reading?

   Yes Partially No

This *Self-Corrective Post Test* form is designed for the convenience of teacher readers to reproduce multiple copies for use as needed.

GLOSSARY

Differential structuring	the various degrees of guidance provided within a question according to student need. This guidance may take the form of locational aid.
Entry behavior	the readiness a student brings to a lesson in terms of skill knowledge and background information.
Grouping	teaming students together for a variety of reasons so that they may benefit from the sharing of information and skills as they interact with one another.
Individualization	providing that guidance necessary to ensure that each student will master the required reading.
Levels of sophistication	different degrees of comprehension ranging from a literal understanding to critical thinking and application.

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COMPETENCY CRITERIA

The following characteristics of effective content-related reading instruction may serve as self-appraisal guidelines.

Students are enabled to gain information, knowledge, wisdom and enjoyment from reading, for my teaching procedures include:

_____ Planning and tailoring my teaching to accommodate the wide range of reading strengths and weaknesses represented within the class.

_____ Fusing reading with other components of language (listening, speaking, and writing) to reinforce meaning.

_____ Relating the content to the varied experiential background of the students.

_____ Encouraging students to react to the meaning of print content by thinking critically about it.

_____ Utilizing many types of reading sources comprising multi-readability levels.

_____ Teaching vocabulary and comprehension skills on various levels to assure that all students experience success.

_____ Guiding silent reading through pre-reading preparation, vocabulary assistance, and skillful questioning.

_____ Providing for varied uses of reading in problem solving, gaining information, and enjoyment.

_____ Modeling positive attitudes for students by being a high interest reader myself.

_____ Being committed to improve reading abilities and book interest within the class and school.

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